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ROME, ST. PAUL, AND THE EARLY CHURCH. W. S. MUNTZ, D.D. The Young Churchman Co. 1913. Pp. xvi, 227.

The chief purpose of this work, or at least its most distinctive feature, is the use of the conceptions of Roman Law to illuminate certain of St. Paul's phrases. In the main the author repeats what Ramsay and Deissmann have said on the same subject. Where he goes beyond them he stretches this method of interpretation too far. There is not much booty to be won in this field. One might summarize in ten pages all that can be aptly said. The author's presentation is less telling than it ought to be, because it is diffuse and repetitious. At one point there emerges a glaring contradiction which suggests some doubt of the author's interpretation as a whole. On page 100 it is said that "the principles of our law" cannot satisfactorily explain St. Paul's phrase "heirs of God." According to the conceptions of Roman jurisprudence "heirs" and "inheritance" implied the very reverse of the conceptions implied in the modern use of these terms. "Birth, not death, according to Roman Law, brought the heir into being." But on page 165, in the discussion of the South Galatian theory, it is said: "By the testamentary law of Rome in the age of Paul, a will was a secret instrument while the testator lived; it took effect at death only, and, moreover, was revocable. Accordingly Roman wills at that time were on these points similar to English wills of today." Whatever the fact may be, the method evidently is precarious. Incidentally it may be remarked that the South Galatian theory had better not be discussed at all if space is lacking to discuss it adequately. It is interjected here irrelevantly.

The title which the author has chosen is a charter of limitless scope—and, unfortunately, he has taken advantage of it. In the case especially of so small a book one might expect (and wish) that the topics, Rome, St. Paul, and the Early Church would be dealt with only so far as they all three have to do with one another. The author, if he has not dealt too much at length with Roman institutions, has dwelt upon peculiarities of St. Paul's character and doctrine which were neither influenced by Roman Law nor influential in the history of the Early Church, and along some lines he has followed the history of the Church well into the Middle Ages. The author warmly combats the prejudice which disparages the forensic element in St. Paul's doctrine; it was good in itself and also valuable as a means of interpreting the Gospel to the Gentile world.

But on the other hand, he would trace to the influence of the conceptions of Roman Law almost all that he accounts bad in the theology of the Western Church and in its discipline—particularly the idea of Papal supremacy. It is, of course, not impossible that the same influence which was salutary to St. Paul worked only mischief to the Church after him; but in the lack of any stringent proof of this, one is more inclined to think that the author's judgment of values is perilously subjective.

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COMPARATIVE RELIGION. F. B. JEVONS. (Cambridge Manuals of Science and Literature.) 1913. Pp. viii, 152.

This is religion in a nut shell—it is a temptation to say, in a peanut shell. It includes, besides an Introduction, chapters on Sacrifice, Magic, Ancestor-Worship, the Future Life, Dualism, Buddhism, Monotheism, a short bibliography, and an index.

Readers of Professor Jevons' earlier books need not be told that he brings to his task ample knowledge or that he writes with admirable lucidity. But in putting so much into such small compass, qualifications and explanations are impossible, and the concise statements and broad generalizations leave large room for misunderstanding, when they do not invite it.

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A HALF-DOZEN BOOKS.

Our group is varied. It ranges in subject matter from *Gospel Origins*¹ to *The Christian Reconstruction of Modern Life*.² In method of treatment it descends from the severe and comprehensive dialectic of A. Schweitzer (*Paul and his Interpreters*³) to the "popular" level of Holdsworth. In style it includes the new instalment of Edwin A. Abbott's encyclopaedic exegetical notes (*Light on the Gospels from an Ancient Poet*⁴), Fr. Spitta's latest documentary analysis (*Die Syn-*

¹ By W. W. Holdsworth, M.A. From the Scribner series of "Studies in Theology." 1913. Pp. 211. 75 cents.

² By Charles Henry Dickinson. Macmillan. 1913. Pp. 327. \$1.50.

³ From the German Paulinische Forschung by W. Montgomery. Macmillan. 1912. Pp. 253. \$2.75.

⁴ Part ix of the Diatessarica, Cambridge University Press. 1912. Pp. 602.